

Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Original) A process for producing anatase titanium oxide, comprising the

steps of:

heat treating a titania sol solution, a titania gel, or a titania sol-gel mixture in a closed vessel under pressure, said titania sol solution, titania gel, or titania sol-gel mixture containing as a solvent an alcohol having a structure represented by formula $C_nH_{2n+1}OH$; and then drying the treated product to prepare anatase titanium oxide powder.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Previously Amended) The process for producing anatase titanium oxide according to claim 1, wherein the titania sol solution, the titania gel, or the titania sol-gel mixture is heat treated in the temperature range of 80 to 250°C in the closed vessel.

4. (Previously Amended) The process for producing anatase titanium oxide according to claim 1, wherein the titania sol solution, the titania gel, or the titania sol-gel mixture is heat treated in the closed vessel under a pressure of 1.5 to 350 atmA.

5. (Previously Amended) The process for producing anatase titanium oxide according to claim 1, wherein the contents of the closed vessel are heated to evaporate the solvent contained in the titania sol solution, the titania gel, or the titania sol-gel mixture, whereby the inside of the closed vessel is pressurized by gas generated as a result of the evaporation of the solvent.

6. (Previously Amended) The process for producing anatase titanium oxide according to claim 1, wherein inert gas is introduced into the closed vessel to pressurize the inside of the closed vessel.

7. (Previously Amended) The process for producing anatase titanium oxide according to claim 1, wherein at least one member selected from the group consisting of acidic materials, alkaline materials, organic polymers, and inorganic materials is added to the titania sol solution, the titania gel, or the titania sol-gel mixture.

8. (Currently Amended) A process for producing anatase titanium oxide, comprising the steps of:

heat treating a substantially organic solvent-free aqueous titania sol solution, titania gel, or titania sol-gel mixture in a closed vessel under pressure; and

then drying the treated product to prepare anatase titanium oxide powder,

wherein a titanium alkoxide is provided as a starting material for the production of a substantially organic solvent-free aqueous titania sol solution, titania gel, or titania sol-gel mixture and is hydrolyzed in aqueous hydrogen peroxide or aqueous ozone and, at the same time, is dissolved in aqueous hydrogen peroxide or aqueous ozone to produce a substantially organic solvent-free aqueous titania sol solution, titania gel, or titania sol-gel mixture.

9. (Canceled)

10. (Currently Amended) The process for producing anatase titanium oxide according to claim 8, wherein the substantially organic ~~solven free~~ ~~solvent-free~~ aqueous titania sol solution, titania gel, or titania sol-gel mixture is heat treated in the temperature range of 120 to 270°C in the closed vessel.

11. (Previously Amended) The process for producing anatase titanium oxide according to claim 8, wherein the contents of the closed vessel are heated to evaporate the solvent contained in the substantially organic solvent-free aqueous titania sol solution, titania gel, or titania sol-gel mixture, whereby the inside of the closed vessel is pressurized at a pressure of 1.5 to 33 atmA by gas generated as a result of the evaporation of the solvent.

12. (Canceled)

13. (Previously Amended) The process for producing anatase titanium oxide according to claim 8, wherein at least one member selected from the group consisting of water-soluble metal salts, acidic materials, alkaline materials, organic polymers, inorganic materials, and metal alkoxides other than titanium alkoxides is added to the substantially organic solvent-free aqueous titania sol solution, titania gel, or titania sol-gel mixture.

14. (Previously Amended) The process for producing anatase titanium oxide according to claim 8, wherein inert gas is introduced into the closed vessel to pressurize the inside of the closed vessel.

15-19. (Canceled)